



Learn English Through
Stories.

U Series

Advanced Vocabulary

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Banta's Journey to Success by K S Sandhu

Banta had always dreamed of working in a bank. After finishing his Business Studies degree, he felt ready to start his career. One day, he found an advertisement for a Customer Service Assistant position at FDR Bank. The job sounded perfect: dealing with customer enquiries by phone and email, full training provided, excellent career prospects, and a good benefits package including pension, healthcare, and subsidised meals. He decided to apply immediately.

Banta wrote a simple application email and attached his CV. In it, he mentioned his recent degree, his interest in banking and finance modules, and his two years as a part-time sales assistant in a large department store. He described himself as a team player who was keen to develop his career. He sent the email full of hope.

A week later, he received an automatic reply: "Thank you for your application. Unfortunately, your profile does not match our current requirements." Banta felt disappointed. He had not even been invited for an interview. He wondered what had gone wrong.

The next weekend, Banta visited his cousin Ramo, who worked in human resources. Over coffee, he showed her his CV and the job advert. Ramo read everything carefully and smiled gently.

"Your degree and experience are good, Banta, but your CV needs to speak directly to this job. Look – the advert asks for excellent communication skills and a genuine passion for customer service. You mention your sales job, but you don't explain how it connects to helping customers in a bank. Also, your language is a bit basic. Recruiters at this level expect more professional and precise English."

Ramo spent the afternoon helping him rewrite the CV. They added strong action verbs like "resolved", "handled", and "built". They included specific examples: "Successfully handled over 50 customer enquiries per shift, resolving issues quickly and politely." They also added a short personal statement tailored to FDR Bank, showing enthusiasm for the financial sector and customer care. Banta felt much more confident when he submitted the improved application.

Two weeks later, joy! FDR Bank invited him to an interview. Banta prepared carefully. He read about the bank online, practised answering questions about customer service, and chose smart clothes. The interview went reasonably well. He spoke clearly and smiled a lot. The manager asked about difficult customers and teamwork, and Banta gave examples from his shop job.

However, a few days later, he received another email: “We were impressed by your enthusiasm, but we have decided to offer the position to a candidate with slightly more relevant experience.” Banta was heartbroken. He had come so close.

That evening, he called his uncle Gulwant, a retired English teacher who had spent thirty years teaching advanced students. Uncle Gulwant listened patiently and invited Banta to his house the next day.

“Interviews are not only about what you know,” Uncle Gulwant explained. “They are about how clearly and confidently you express yourself – especially at C1 level. Your ideas are good, but your answers were probably too short or a bit repetitive. Let’s work on your spoken English.”

For the next three weeks, they practised every evening. Uncle Gulwant taught him useful phrases for interviews: “I strongly believe that...”, “In my experience...”, “One of my key strengths is...”. They role-played difficult scenarios, such as dealing with an angry customer or explaining why Banta wanted to work at FDR Bank. Uncle Gulwant corrected small grammar mistakes, improved Banta’s pronunciation of tricky words like “enquiries” and “prospects”, and helped him sound more natural and fluent. He also advised Banta to ask intelligent questions at the end of the interview, such as “What opportunities are there for professional development within the first two years?”

When FDR Bank advertised more Customer Service Assistant positions a month later, Banta applied again with his updated CV. This time he was invited to interview quickly. He felt nervous, but well-prepared.

During the interview, Banta spoke smoothly. He gave detailed, structured answers using examples and linking words naturally. When asked why he wanted the job, he replied: “I am genuinely passionate about customer service because I enjoy turning a negative experience into a positive one. In my sales role, I once helped an upset customer find exactly what she needed after three

other shops had failed. That moment taught me the real value of patience and empathy – qualities I want to bring to FDR Bank.”

At the end, he asked two thoughtful questions about training and career progression. The interviewers nodded and smiled.

Ten days later, Banta received the call he had been waiting for.

“Congratulations! We would like to offer you the position of Customer Service Assistant.” He could hardly believe it. He thanked them warmly and accepted immediately.

That evening, Banta called Ramo and Uncle Gulwant to share the good news. “Thank you both,” he said. “Your help made all the difference.”

Ramo laughed. “You did the hard work, Banta. We just helped you show your best self.”

Uncle Gulwant added proudly, “And your English is now excellent. Keep practising – this is only the beginning.”

Banta smiled. His new job at FDR Bank was the first step on a long and exciting career path – and he was ready.

3 Applying for a job

A A job ad

FDR BANK Careers Branches About Us Contact

Customer Service Assistant

Do you have excellent **communication skills** and a genuine **passion for**¹ customer service? Are you looking for a **challenging**² role within a **fast-paced**³ working environment?

FDR Bank has several new **openings**⁴ for Customer Service Assistants. **Reporting to**⁵ the Customer Service Manager, you will be responsible for dealing with customer enquiries on the phone and via email. No **previous experience**⁶ is necessary as **full training**⁷ will be given. The **post**⁸ offers excellent **career prospects**⁹ to candidates who demonstrate **leadership qualities**¹⁰ as we are keen to promote and develop talent within the company.

We offer a **competitive salary**¹¹ and an attractive **benefits package**¹² including pension, **healthcare plan** and **subsidised**¹³ meals.

If this sounds like the job for you, then click [here](#) to fill in the **online application form**, including details of your **salary expectations**.

- ¹ if you have a passion for something, you like it very much
- ² a positive word for something which is exciting and difficult
- ³ if an environment is fast-paced, things happen quickly there
- ⁴ available jobs
- ⁵ if you report to someone, he/she is your boss
- ⁶ experience of this type of job from before
- ⁷ all the training you need
- ⁸ job
- ⁹ opportunities for promotion and career development
- ¹⁰ the ability to lead a group
- ¹¹ as good as, or better than, other salaries for similar jobs
- ¹² all the extra benefits that a company offers (as well as a salary)
- ¹³ partly paid for by the company

B A cover letter

You want your application to **stand out** (be better than others), so you should include a clear, well-written **cover letter**¹ which highlights key points from your CV. Here is a letter sent with the application for the job in A above.

Mention any studies or training courses you have done which are **relevant to** [connected to] the role.

If you have previous managerial experience, you can say 'In my **previous role as** (Sales Manager), I **led a team of** (four people).'

Dear **Sir or Madam**²

Please find attached my CV **in support of** my application for the **position** of Customer Service Assistant. I have just completed my degree in Business Studies and am keen to gain **hands-on**³ experience in this area.

During my course I chose to study several modules on banking and finance, as I have always been interested in working in this **field**⁴. In addition, I have worked as a part-time sales assistant in a large department store for the last two years. This has given me valuable **customer-facing**⁵ experience, as well as developing good communication skills both with customers and the rest of the team. I am a **team player**⁶ and I am keen to develop my career and gain **managerial experience**⁷ in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this application and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully⁸

Rebecca White

Be sure to specify the job you are applying for at the beginning of the letter.

It is important to mention any relevant experience you have, to show your **suitability for** the role. If you can, provide examples of specific projects you have **carried out**. [done]

- ¹ a letter sent with a job application (also called a **covering letter**)
- ² how you start a letter when you do not know the name of the person you are writing to
- ³ practical, direct (not theoretical)
- ⁴ area of business or activity
- ⁵ dealing directly with customers
- ⁶ a person who is good at working with others
- ⁷ experience of managing other people
- ⁸ how you finish a letter when you do not know the name of the person you are writing to

Exercises

3.1 Match the two parts of these business collocations from A and B.

1 healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/>	a faithfully
2 team	<input type="checkbox"/>	b prospects
3 Yours	<input type="checkbox"/>	c plan
4 competitive	<input type="checkbox"/>	d a team
5 challenging	<input type="checkbox"/>	e application
6 communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	f role
7 online	<input type="checkbox"/>	g letter
8 lead	<input type="checkbox"/>	h player
9 career	<input type="checkbox"/>	i skills
10 cover	<input type="checkbox"/>	j salary

3.2 Replace the underlined words with a word or phrase from A or B with a similar meaning.

- 1 You don't need to have done this job before.
- 2 As part of my new job, I get meals partly paid for by the company.
- 3 It's really important to make your application look different from all the others.
- 4 Working in the factory over the summer gave me some direct experience of manufacturing.
- 5 I'm hoping to work in the area of automotive manufacturing.
- 6 Prism Consulting has a number of positions available for graduates.
- 7 The ad said the company will provide all the training you need.
- 8 You should only apply for the job if you have led a team before.
- 9 The salary isn't great, but they offer an attractive set of other advantages.

3.3 Look at A and B. Fill the gaps in these sentences, using a word from the box and a suitable preposition.

carried passion relevant reported role suitable support

- 1 I am sending my CV in my application for the position of sales team leader.
- 2 I have a sales.
- 3 Jakob's experience is more the job than Sylvana's.
- 4 In my previous Sales Representative, I the Sales Manager.
- 5 While working as a Customer Service Assistant, I also some research projects for the marketing department.
- 6 He only has 6 months' experience as a trainee. I don't think that makes him the job of quality manager.

3.4 Answer these questions.

- 1 What do we call a job which deals directly with the customers?
- 2 How can we describe someone who works well with other people?
- 3 How should you start a letter to someone whose name you don't know?
- 4 What four other words can be used instead of 'job' in an advertisement?
- 5 How can we describe a working environment which is busy and rapidly changing?

3.5 Over to you

Find a job ad that you are interested in and write an example cover letter in English.

Answers

Unit 3

3.1 1 c 2 h 3 a 4 j 5 f 6 i 7 e 8 d 9 b 10 g

3.2 1 previous experience
2 subsidised meals
3 stand out
4 hands-on
5 field
6 openings (or posts or roles)
7 full training
8 managerial experience
9 benefits package

3.3 1 support of
2 passion for
3 relevant to
4 role as; reported to
5 carried out
6 suitable for

3.4 1 customer-facing
2 team player
3 Dear Sir or Madam
4 post, opening, role, position
5 fast-paced